

HOW TO GET HIGH WITHOUT DRUGS

Adapted from Engs, R.C. *Alcohol and Other Drugs: Self Responsibility*. Tichenor Publishing Company, Bloomington, IN, 1987

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Risky activities and dangerous ventures have attracted many throughout the ages because of the thrill and natural high they often bring. Until recently, many cultures included risky ventures into their social fabric to fulfill this need. As an example, young males in many societies were expected to accomplish dangerous and daring missions such as hunting a bear alone, as an initiation into manhood. **However, as societies changed, these risky "rites of passage" often became extinct.** A need for risky ventures and excitement is thought to be one of the reasons why some get "turned onto drugs." However, other individuals became involved in apparently thrilling and risky recreational activities as an alternative to drugs. Common activities, to be discussed below, tend to fall into airborne, land, and water ventures.

Airborne Activities. Throughout history humans have wanted to fly. This dream has finally become possible during the past 100 years. Airborne ventures now include **airplane and ultralight aircraft flying, soaring, hang gliding, ballooning, and parachute jumping.** All of these activities take training. They are also expensive. **They can be dangerous,** and deaths are recorded each year of participants in these sports. As part of training, however, there is a great emphasis on safety and what to do in emergencies. Many communities and the military often have clubs for these activities which offer training to the beginner. All of these airborne activities offer a challenge, a vehicle for self knowledge, skill building, feeling of accomplishment, and defiance against the elements-especially the air. It is a "high" to be flying above people, buildings, trees, and landscape with the birds.

Land Activities. Humans have occupied caves and climbed mountains since prehistoric times. However, deep cave exploration and mountain climbing were usually thought to be fraught with danger and evil spirits and were considered dangerous. Today many individuals are becoming involved with these sports for the thrill and challenge they offer. Some training is required for **spelunking (cave exploration), rock climbing, and mountaineering,** but equipment is not that expensive. Deaths and injuries are reported for these activities, but safety procedures are emphasized in training to prevent accidents. Many communities sponsor clubs for these sports, and the beginner can receive training, generally

free of charge. **Some other potentially dangerous and thrilling land-based activities include motorcycle racing, drag racing and "demolition derbies"** to name a few. Clubs for these activities are found in many communities. However, they tend not to be popular with college and university students. They do, however, offer an alternative.

Water Activities. Challenging water-based activities include **white-water canoeing, kayaking, sailing, and scuba diving**. These activities have long been attractive to many individuals; some have used variations on their skills as part of their occupations, a necessary contribution to community recreation or public safety. All of these ventures take some training. Though some deaths occur each year from these activities, safety is emphasized in training. There is some expense in renting or purchasing the equipment. However, most university communities have clubs for interested participants, and training and rental are often inexpensive. All of these activities offer a challenge, self knowledge, and escape from the everyday world.

Please note that all of these activities do have potential risks. If you do them please take the proper safety precautions.